

**Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, June 29, 1812,
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Leicester Ford.**

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES J. MSS.

Monticello, June 29, 1812.

Dear Sir, —I duly received your favor of the 22d covering the declaration of war. It is entirely popular here, the only opinion being that it should have been issued the moment the season admitted the militia to enter Canada. * * * To continue the war popular, two things are necessary mainly, 1. To stop Indian barbarities. The conquest of Canada will do this. 2. To furnish markets for our produce, say indeed for our flour, for tobacco is already given up, and seemingly without reluctance. The great profits of the wheat crop have allured every one to it; and never was such a crop on the ground as that which we generally begin to cut this day. It would be mortifying to the farmer to see such an one rot in his barn. It would soon sicken him to war. Nor can this be a matter of wonder or of blame on him. Ours is the only country on earth where war is an instantaneous and total suspension of all the objects of his industry and support. For carrying our produce to foreign markets our own ships, neutral ships, and even enemy ships under neutral flag, which I would wink at, will probably suffice. But the coasting trade is of double importance, because both seller and buyer are disappointed, and both are our own citizens. You will remember that in this trade our greatest distress in the last war was produced by our own pilot boats taken by the British and kept as tenders to their larger vessels. These being the swiftest vessels on the ocean, they took them and selected the swiftest from the whole

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mass. Filled with men they scoured everything along shore, and completely cut up that coasting business which might otherwise have been carried on within

the range of vessels of force and draught. Why should not we then line our coast with vessels of pilot-boat construction, filled with men, armed with cannonades, and only so much larger as to assure the mastery of the pilot boat? The British cannot counter-work us by building similar ones, because, the fact is, however unaccountable, that our builders alone understand that construction. It is on our own pilot boats the British will depend, which our larger vessels may thus retake. These, however, are the ideas of a landsman only. Mr. Hamilton's judgment will test their soundness.

Our militia are much afraid of being called to Norfolk at this season. They all declare a preference of a march to Canada. I trust however that Governor Barbour will attend to circumstances, and so apportion the service among the counties, that those acclimated by birth or residence may perform the summer tour, and the winter service be allotted to the upper counties.

I trouble you with a letter for General Kosciusko. It covers a bill of exchange from Mr. Barnes for him, and is therefore of great importance to him. Hoping you will have the goodness so far to befriend the General as to give it your safest conveyance, I commit it to you, with the assurance of my sincere affections.